



CANADIAN CONSTRUCTION
ASSOCIATION
CANADIENNE DE LA CONSTRUCTION

Gold Seal Certification guide

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Notification concerning the Gold Seal application portal

We are migrating to a new system and will close the current application portal to new applications on April 6, 2020. We encourage potential applicants to read this guide to understand what they will need for their application. Please complete [this form](#) to be notified when we start accepting applications again.

Existing applicants have until April 30 to submit their application for review in the current portal. Your application will either be approved or you will be given a statement of how many credits you currently have, and what is missing to reach the 100 credits required to write the Gold Seal exam.

What is in this guide?

This guide contains information about the Canadian Construction Association's (CCA) Gold Seal Certification program, the designations we certify and the application process. Use it to understand whether you're ready to become a Gold Seal Intern or to take the Gold Seal exam. It also contains information about the documents you'll need to have handy if you apply to either program.

What is Gold Seal Certification?

The Gold Seal Certification program establishes, administers and continuously improves national professional certification standards for construction management. It certifies construction management professionals against these standards and promotes their accredited education and training.

Applicants require a combination of industry **experience**, **education** and **training** to take the exam and become certified.

What designation to apply for?

We certify estimators, foremen, owner's construction managers, project managers, safety coordinators and superintendents. See the occupational profiles posted on the [Gold Seal exam page](#) regarding how we define these designations. Note that we are currently updating all occupational profiles (as well as exam question banks and sample questions). For estimators, project managers and superintendents, we are eliminating disciplines and consolidating the current five discipline-specific occupational profiles to one non-discipline specific occupational profile and exam per designation. All applicants will receive an email when the new occupational profiles are published.

Type of company

Estimators, foremen, project managers, safety coordinators and superintendents must be directly employed by a general, specialty trade, electrical, mechanical or civil infrastructure contractor.

Owner's construction managers are accountable to the procurement authority which can include owners, consultants (on behalf of the owners), general contractors, construction managers and design builders. Owner's construction managers are responsible for managing time, cost, quality, and the project's overall performance, as well as promoting positive relationships with all stakeholders.

Type of project

Residential projects (Part 9 of the National Building Code) do not count toward industry experience credits. We accept residential occupancies and projects that fall under Part 3 of the National Building Code's industrial, commercial, institutional or heavy civil sector.

Job titles

Your job title may differ from our official designation name. For example, in some companies "General Foreman" is used instead of "Superintendent". In these cases, the "Experience" section and your letter of recommendation must provide details on what your duties entail.

Job duties

In order to qualify to write the Gold Seal exam, you need to be currently employed in and have at least 5 years of experience in the designation that you are applying for. Experience in another designation doesn't count for credits. E.g. if you are applying as an estimator, your experience as foreman doesn't qualify for credits. However, for superintendents, two years as a foreman can count since often companies don't have an "assistant superintendent" role but it is filled by a foreman.

Some applicants spend e.g. 10% of their time at the onset of a project doing estimating and the rest of the time doing project manager's duties. What matters is that most of your duties align with the occupational profile for the designation that you have chosen. Again, the "Experience" section and your letter of recommendation must provide details on what your duties entail.

Do I qualify to apply?

Gold Seal Intern

If you have at least one year of experience in your designation – or two years in an assistant's role, you can register as a Gold Seal Intern (GSI). You'll have up to five years to meet the Gold Seal Certification requirements and to take the Gold Seal exam to become Gold Seal Certified. Note that the application fee (non-refundable) for GSI is \$125 plus applicable taxes. When you meet the GSC requirements and want to re-submit your application, you will need to pay the \$525 non-refundable GSC application fee.

If you have just **one** year of significant experience in the Canadian construction industry, you can apply to become an intern and receive 10 credits for that one year's experience. These credits go toward your 50-credit requirement for the Gold Seal Certification exam.

OR

If you have **two** years of experience as an assistant (e.g., assistant superintendent, assistant project manager, junior estimator), you can apply to join as an intern with 20 credits. These credits go toward your 50-credit requirement for the Gold Seal exam. You can't earn more than 20 credits for your time as an assistant.

Unlike the full Gold Seal Certification program, you do not need any credits in education and training to apply.

You'll have up to five years to meet the Gold Seal Certification requirements and to take the Gold Seal exam to become Gold Seal Certified. Note that the application fee (non-refundable) for GSI is \$125 plus applicable taxes. When you meet the GSC requirements and want to re-submit your application, you will need to pay the \$525 non-refundable GSC application fee.

Gold Seal Certification

If you have more than five years of experience in your designation, you may apply for your Gold Seal Certified (GSC) designation.

You need **100 credits** to apply to take the Gold Seal exam (foremen only need 75 credits):

- You need at least **50 credits** in industry experience.
- You need at least **25 credits** in education and training.
- Applicants in every designation *except* foremen need an additional **25 credits** in either category.

Minimum requirements: Industry experience

You need at least five years of experience in the designation you are applying for (i.e., 50 credits). You receive 10 credits for each year of experience you have in the field. There are a few other conditions you need to meet:

- Your experience must be in the industrial, commercial, institutional, or heavy civil sectors.
- At least three of your five years of experience must have been in Canada.
- If you are applying as a foreman, three of your five years of experience must have been in a foreman's position.
- Up to two years as an assistant count toward the five-year requirement (e.g., assistant superintendent, assistant project manager, junior estimator).
- Must currently be employed in the designation you have selected.

Owner's construction manager: Not for profit/government employment experience is eligible for credits.

Note that the current year doesn't count as it is not a full year. Therefore, if you apply in 2020, you need to demonstrate that you are employed in the designation that you are applying for in 2020 and relevant experience for 2015 – 2019.

Minimum requirements: Education and training

You must have at least 25 credits in formal education and/or training before you apply to take the certification exam. All training and courses must have been completed within the last 10 years. There is no time limit on formal education you have completed. Note that you can't use the same courses from your formal education to gain additional training credits.

Formal education

Credits are awarded for the highest level of education you have achieved, related to the construction industry (e.g. a construction management degree or a technologist's diploma).

Tradesperson qualification	10 credits
Industry-related technician	20 credits
Technologist diploma	25 credits
Industry-related university degree	30 credits
Construction management degree program	40 credits

You must attach your diploma with your application.

- If you do not have formal education, you can make up for it with training credits.
- If you have a **foreign formal education**, we require proof of Canadian equivalency. You can obtain that proof through an academic credential assessment service provider, such as the [Canadian Information Center for International Credentials](#).

Accredited training

The Gold Seal Certification program accredits training that meets our national curriculum standard. These courses have been pre-approved and guarantee you will earn a designated number of Gold Seal credits. There are more than [1,000 Canadian Gold Seal-accredited education and training seminars, workshops](#) and courses listed on the Gold Seal website.

Non-accredited training

We also recognize non-accredited construction management courses that fall under our Gold Seal national curriculum standard. If a course is recognized, you will receive one credit for every six hours of training. There are 11 national curriculum standard areas in which you can earn credits:

1. Overview of the construction industry
2. Construction safety*
3. Communication
4. Law and contracts for the construction industry
5. Construction estimating
6. Management of human resources

7. Construction job site controls
8. Construction planning/scheduling
9. Project cost control and accounting
10. Project management process
11. Construction and environment

*Superintendents may earn a maximum of 10 credits through safety courses while estimators, owner's construction managers, project managers and foremen may receive a maximum of five credits through safety courses. There is no limit on safety courses for safety coordinators.

Please consult our [national curriculum standard](#) to read descriptions of acceptable seminars, workshops, and courses. Note that they must be managerial rather than technical. Exceptions are made for some technical courses.

Mandatory training

- **Construction Industry Ethics courses**
 - All candidates *must* take the Construction Industry Ethics courses (3 credits) which includes online *and* classroom components.
 - Courses are offered through local construction associations across the country. Please contact your [local construction association](#) to learn more about course schedules.
 - We don't accept any other ethics courses.
- **Designation-specific training**
 - Depending on which designation you choose, you must earn at least two of your training credits in specific areas:
 - Safety Coordinator:* No topic-specific requirements
 - Estimator:* Measuring construction work, drawings and specifications, construction contracts, pricing/bidding, construction documents, regulatory codes, scheduling communication
 - Foreman:* Must take *Construction 101* and *Leadership for Safety Excellence* or its equivalent; no topic-specific requirements
 - Owner's construction manager:* Law and contracts in the construction industry, construction planning and scheduling, project management, project costing control/accounting
 - Project manager:* Law and contracts in the construction industry, construction planning and scheduling, project management, project costing control/accounting
 - Superintendent:* Management of human resources in the construction industry, jobsite controls, planning/scheduling

Am I automatically eligible for exam or certification?

You may be automatically eligible to write the Gold Seal exam or become certified if you have one of these four designations. Note that three years of experience must be in the Canadian industry.

1. Chartered Institute of Builders (CIOB)

Chartered Members (MCIOB) automatically meet the educational requirements (50 credits) to challenge the exam with 5 years of experience and mandatory ethics courses. You must apply to take the exam.

2. National Construction Safety Officer (NCSO)

If you have your NCSO, five years of construction site safety experience* and have taken the Construction Industry Ethics courses, you're automatically eligible to take the construction safety coordinator exam. You must apply to take the exam.

3. Construction Estimator Certified (CEC)

If you have your CEC, you're automatically eligible to take the estimator exam. You must apply to take the exam.

4. Professional Surveyor (PQS) issued by the Canadian Institute of Quantity Surveyors

If you have your PQS issued by the Canadian Institute of Quantity Surveyors, you're automatically eligible for Gold Seal Certification. You do not have to take the exam, but you must apply to receive your certification.

What is the application process?

All applicants complete the same [online application form](#). But remember, Gold Seal Interns and Gold Seal Certification by exam have different requirements, so make sure you only fill in what's required.

Gold Seal Intern

If you apply as an intern, you will go through a similar process to the Gold Seal Certification by exam. Your application will be reviewed by your local construction association and a national reviewer. The non-refundable application submission fee is \$125 (plus applicable taxes).

Once you are accepted as an intern, you can update your online application form with your education and experience as you prepare to apply to write the Gold Seal Certification exam. When you meet the requirements to write the exam, you may submit your application for \$525 (plus applicable taxes; non-refundable).

Once you are approved to write the exam, you will be able to select an exam date.

You have a maximum of five years as an intern to meet the requirements and take the Gold Seal Certification exam. It is up to you to update your application over those five years. If you have any questions or require any assistance, please contact Gold Seal at goldseal@cca-acc.com.

Gold Seal Certification by exam

Once you have completed your online application, your local construction association will review it and determine whether your application is ready to proceed to national review. If it is not ready, you may be asked to clarify aspects of your application and resubmit it for review.

Once it is approved by your local construction association, an industry expert will review your application at the national level and make the final decision about whether to invite you to write the exam. National reviewers may ask for further details about any portion of your application.

The entire review process typically takes 4 - 6 weeks. We will notify you of the outcome by email. If you are eligible to write the exam, you will be able to log into the portal to select your exam date. Remember, it is your responsibility to select an exam date.

The non-refundable application submission fee is \$525 (plus applicable taxes).

If you have any questions about the application process, please contact Gold Seal at goldseal@cca-acc.com.

How do I apply?

Note that an incomplete application delays the review process. Make sure all required documents are attached before submitting your application. If you experience technical difficulties at any point during the application process, please click on the "[Report technical issue](#)" link at the bottom of the page on the login page and in the portal.

Step 1: Create an account [online](#) (see the note about portal closure on p.1)

Whitelist [@goldsealcertification.com](mailto:goldsealcertification.com) domain so that you can receive system-generated notices about your application.

Log into the online portal and create an account. Once you create your account, you will receive an email asking you to verify your email address. If you didn't receive this email, please click on the "Report technical issue" link at the bottom of the login page.

Step 2: Add your personal and employer information

Update your account with your personal and employer information.

Step 3: Select your designation

Select your designation from a list of six options. You must be employed in the designation for which you are applying.

Step 4. Detail your industry experience

Include the name of one project you worked on for each *full* year of your experience. If you have more work experience, you may include them for additional Gold Seal credits. Do not include multiple projects from the same year. Each year/project is worth 10 credits.

Remember: If you apply as a Gold Seal Intern, you only need to provide details about **one** project representing one year of your industry experience (i.e. 10 credits). If you apply with two years of experience in assistant positions, you need to provide details about **two** projects, representing two years of your industry experience (i.e. 20 credits).

For **each** project, provide the following information:

Project Name*	Contract/Sub Contract dollar value*	Year*
Description*	Employer*	Designation*
Owner or prime contractor*	Contact Name*	Phone Number*
Project Specific Duties*		

Exceptions and special instructions

Automatic eligibility

If you have **PQS** or **CEC** designations, you do not need to include a project list in your application. If you have an **MCIQB** or **NCSO** designation, you only need to include five projects from five different years. You may include additional projects for additional years, but they are not necessary.

Residential experience

Please do not include projects that fall under Part 9 of the *National Building Code*, including single-family residences, regardless of their size. They do not count toward industry experience credits in this application. We accept residential occupancies and projects that fall under Part 3 of the *National Building Code's* industrial, commercial, institutional, or heavy civil sector.

Not-for-profit experience

Employment at non-profit organizations (including governments) is only eligible for experience credits if you apply for the owner's construction manager designation or internship.

Step 5. List your education and training

Please read the *Minimum requirements: Education and training* section on p. 3 to be sure you have taken all the mandatory training seminars, workshops and courses. Pay particular attention to the *Mandatory training* section.

School Level*	Name*	City*
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Program/study completed*	Number of years total*	Year Completed*
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Diploma / Degree*	*	*
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Course Name/Description*	Institution/Organization*	Year*
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Duration (Hours)*	Certificate*	
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	

Credits will not be issued without this documentation:

- proof of any formal education you have completed (e.g., diploma, certificate);
- titles of each training seminar, workshop and course taken in the past 10 years. Please include the duration of each one (i.e. the number of hours);
- record of attendance or certificate of completion for every training seminar, workshop or course you've completed.

Remember: There are no education and training requirements if you apply to become a Gold Seal Intern. Still, we encourage you to provide as much information about your training and work experience as possible.

Only enter the Construction Industry Ethics courses under Mandatory Training.

Step 6. Attach a letter of recommendation

You will need a signed letter of recommendation from your current employer detailing your position at the company, your length of time with the company and a summary of your duties. If you are self-employed, please provide a letter from a client detailing your company name, your position title, your length of time in business and a summary of your duties.

- The letter needs to be current and written by your direct supervisor.

Step 7. Complete the survey

Answer the questions regarding how you learned about Gold Seal Certification and why you want to become certified.

Step 8. Attach additional information

If there is any additional information that may support your application, please upload it.

Step 9. Pay the application fee

This is the last step in your application. Once it is completed, you cannot change the information in your application unless the Gold Seal staff changes the status of your application.

- Only press “Submit” once. Wait for the submission to go through.
- Receipts are issues through PayPal. If you didn’t receive a receipt, check your spam folder. You can contact goldseal@cca-acc.com for receipt.

Application fee processing

Application fees are non-refundable. We will process your fee as soon as we receive your application. **This does not mean you are approved to write the Gold Seal exam.**

If you are accepted to the program and withdraw from it at any time, we will retain an administrative fee of \$75 (plus applicable taxes).

What else do I need to know about the exam?

When is the submission deadline?

We offer the Gold Seal Certification exams in January, April (not available in 2020) and October. Check the [Gold Seal Certification website](#) for precise dates. You must select your exam date *at least* two weeks before the exam date.

Is there a study guide for the exam?

The Gold Seal Certification program has used adult learning professionals, industry experts and groups of volunteer industry practitioners to define the knowledge, skills and abilities that construction professionals working in Gold Seal designations should possess. The Gold Seal exam measures the applicants against this standard. There is no guidebook to study; the candidates apply the knowledge gained over a minimum of 5 years’ experience plus the applicable training and education. Ideally, Gold Seal candidates should read the applicable occupational profile (see the Gold Seal exam page) as they are planning their applications, to identify any additional learning and training needs, to maximize the likelihood of passing the exam.

Where do I write the exam?

You will write your exam at the local construction association you selected when you created your account.

If you are scheduled to write the exam and fail to attend, there is an administrative fee of \$50 (plus applicable taxes).

What are the technical requirements?

You must bring a laptop computer to the exam as one will not be provided to you. The computer you use for your exam must meet these technical requirements:

- It must be able to connect to your local construction association's wireless account.
- It must have an up-to-date version of Chrome, Firefox, Safari or Edge. You cannot take the exam using Internet Explorer.
- It should have a screen that is 11 inches or larger.
- We recommend a standard keyboard instead of an on-screen keyboard.
- We recommend using a mouse, touchpad or trackball, not a touchscreen monitor.

In which language may I write the exam?

You may write the exam in English or French. You must be proficient in one of these languages to write the exam.

What is the exam's pass mark?

The exam's pass mark is 75%. The exam questions are developed and vetted by industry experts in each of the designations we certify.

How long is the exam?

You have 3.5 hours to complete the exam.

I have questions. Who do I call?

If you have questions about GSI or GSC, email goldseal@cca-acc.com.